

June 15, 2009

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 530 commends the purpose of the third annual Civil Rights Baseball Game and recognizes the historic significance of the location of the Civil Rights Baseball Game in Cincinnati, Ohio.

I want to commend my colleague the gentleman from Cincinnati (Mr. *Driehaus*) for introducing this legislation. The Civil Rights Baseball Game is an important event, and it deserves to be recognized by the House of Representatives.

The third annual Civil Rights Baseball Game will be played in Cincinnati, Ohio, at the Great American Ballpark on June 20, 2009, between the Cincinnati Reds and the Chicago White Sox. Many celebrities will be in attendance, including Hank Aaron, Muhammad Ali, Bill Cosby, and Bebe Winans. This Major League Baseball game was created to honor those who fought both on and off the field for equal treatment of all people.

The first Civil Rights Baseball Game was played in Memphis, Tennessee, in 2007, between the St. Louis Cardinals and the Cleveland Indians. It was organized as a preseason game, intended to commend the civil rights movement in the United States as part of a larger celebration of the civil rights movement. Memphis was selected for its important role in the history of the civil rights movement.

This year's host city, Cincinnati, Ohio, has a long and rich history in both the game of baseball and in the field of civil rights. Cincinnati was an important stop on the Underground Railroad and is the home of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center located adjacent to the ballpark. Cincinnati was also home to the Negro League's Cincinnati Tigers from 1934 to 1937, and it was in Cincinnati that the first night baseball game was played in 1935.

Mr. Speaker, baseball has long been considered the great American pastime. It is part of our culture. It reflects the values of teamwork, competition, fair play, and the pursuit of excellence. Baseball was once segregated, as was most of the rest of the country, until Branch Rickey signed Jackie Robinson to play for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. The rest of the Nation would

follow in time, but it was on the diamond that we made the most important steps towards ending Jim Crow. As Mr. Rickey said, ``Prejudice has no place in sports, and baseball must recognize that truth if it is to maintain stature as a national game."

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleague from Ohio in honoring the Civil Rights Baseball Game. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.